

# 2004 Report of Accomplishments

## Adams Conservation District



### Natural Resource Improvements in 2003-2004 Summary

- Diverse “Best Management Practice” accomplishments were achieved though out a 4 WRIA area of responsibility!
  1. “Adams County Fecal Base Line” –“Lower Palouse River Scoping”- “Cow Creek Implementation” all DOE funded, combined with WCC Implementation grant provided cost share support to meet primary objectives.
    - 4 sediment containment structures completed.
    - 1 grassed waterway installed
    - 12 livestock watering tanks installed
    - 1 solar well pumping system developed.
    - 7 Wildlife Guzzlers installed
    - 1 Animal Feeding enclosure completed
    - Over 8500 plants introduced into a 1 mile riparian corridor enhancement project.
    - 10,750 feet of new stream fence protection along Cow Creek
    - 1,744 feet of fence installed to protect Turner Springs stream entering the Palouse River
    - 3,106 feet of cross fencing to improve grazing options along the Palouse River breaks
    - 2, 032 feet of wildlife habitat fencing to protect native grasses in a shrub steppe environment.
    - Over 25,000 acres cultivated under reduced tillage programs to promote increased residue management
    - Over 2000 acres cultivated utilizing reservoir tillage concepts utilizing “Dammer Diker” equipment
    - Over 10,000 acres seeded utilizing direct seed-minimum tillage concepts
    - Monthly monitoring of county streams to determine water quality information for evaluation of implementation practices
    - Approximately 25% of the Dry land area within Adams Conservation District has been committed to the Federal Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) reducing the wind blown fugitive dust, improving air quality and enhancing the wildlife habitat throughout the county.
  2. 5 County Direct Seed Minimum Tillage project encompassing a 720 acres research commitment for 6 yrs in support of CP3 program.
  3. Ground Water Management Support project assisting Adams, Franklin and Grant County with Deep Soil Sampling, Irrigation Water Monitoring, and well testing providing ground water nitrate research information.
  4. Interaction & commitment with watershed planning programs for WRIA 34 (Palouse River Drainage) and WRIA 43 (Upper Crab Creek Drainage) FFA soil judging contest for over 200 high school students from Washington Schools
  5. 5<sup>th</sup> grade field day for 65 students from four local school locations
  6. 6<sup>th</sup> grade environmental essay contest involving three schools and approximately 55 students.



### Mission of the Adams Conservation District

- The Adams Conservation District promotes the enhancement of the natural environment and provides technical assistance to develop a positive relationship toward achieving that goal.

### Water Quality Implementation

- In support of local work group priorities established through the Federal NRCS “EQIP” program combined with a combination of State Department of Ecology and Washington Conservation Commission funds a diverse number of implementation practices were completed through “Americorp” Washington Conservation Corp technical assistance crews installing over 15,000 feet of

*new fencing, planting approximately 2 miles of riparian corridor habitat improvements and assisting in the installation of several off site watering tanks throughout the eastern most portion of Adams county.*

- *In recognition that 287,000 acres of the WRIA 34 watershed located within the eastern portion of Adams Conservation District is under the direct control of less than 15 landowners, over one third of the agriculture producers were actively participating during the past year in programs directly associated with conservation districts funded or NRCS Federal programs to address water quality issues by installing over 5 miles of fence and installing over 10 new off site watering areas that will restrict animal grazing of the area waters. "Many additional accomplishments go unreported due to non participatory relationships some ranchers have toward any type of regulatory involvement."*
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### **Basic Funding**

- *Providing "Information & Education" to the public through newsletters, annual meetings, fair displays, FFA soil judging, 5<sup>th</sup> grade field day, 6<sup>th</sup> grade essay, CP3 meeting presentations, Watershed planning participation, Big Bend RC&D participation, Ground Water Management Area participation, Columbia Basin Development League participation, WSU Ralston Field Day and Lind Field Day support in addition to local tour participation to promote latest implementation efforts as required to represent district interest and concerns brings an awareness to the local producers of innovative concepts for achieving conservation promotional activities.*
  - *Administrative tasks have increased substantially over the past year requiring an increased dissemination of information through more participation.*
  - *The increased amount of "direct seed minimum tillage" concepts in addition to "residue management" and "reservoir tillage" concepts have resulted in most producers either actively changing over to the new methods now available or considering doing so as funds allow for the transition to new equipment. Such transitions are a direct result of the district 's active equipment rental program.*
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### **Local Funding**

- *No direct county funding exists within this Conservation District although the districts assists with the administrative duties directly associated toward the Adams County Water Conservancy Board water rights application process and are reimbursed for specific direct administrative support. The delegated Adams county burn authority contracted by the Department of Ecology has sub-contracted with the Adams Conservation District to issue local permits and limited funding is received through this effort to compensate for administrative requirements.*
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### **Professional Engineering**

- *Very limited support has been received during the past season, however a continuation of previous seasons stream bank protection program utilizes most available hours approved for the districts authorized time.*
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### **Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)**

- *The CREP program is not applicable for this district.*
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### **Dairy**

- *Only one dairy exists within the CD under the control of the Huttarian commune and they meet all state nutrient management requirements.*
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### **Irrigation Efficiencies**

- *An "Irrigation Water Monitoring" (IWM) service is provided to the local cooperators through district trained employees.*
  - *918 acres of IWM supported through the Ground Water Management Program*
  - *712 Acres of IWM supported through the Federal EQIP program*
  - *Providing IWM services for 20 pivot circles for over 1600 acres provides improved efficiencies for conservation of both electrical power usage and reduced ground water withdrawals. Irrigation plans are developed for EQIP programs.*
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### **Watershed Conservation/Habitat Restoration**

- *One Animal Feeding Operation that is located within yards of a stream has now been totally renovated to restrict all animal access to stream, allowing the riparian corridor to reproduce and improved enhancement efforts of planting an additional 8000 native plants, adding 7 additional water tanks, a new well and separating the area into manageable grazing paddocks offers environmental protection while allowing beef productivity to continue. The first 6 months following the fence restrictions have shown remarkable improvements on riparian restoration efforts.*
- *A 900 acre area overlooking the Palouse River has been subdivided through cross fencing providing improved grazing efficiencies, including wildlife protection through additional fencing while protecting conservation reserve program lands and restricting animal access to stream through additional fencing. Additional restoration projects are planned during the next year to address off site water support issues.*

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### **Small Farm Programs**

- *Three cooperators have inquired about windbreak project however plans are still under development.*
- *Three cooperators have planted native vegetation to improve wildlife habitat and shade streams to support local fish populations.*

### **Community Collaboration & Coordination**

- *Maintaining a balanced conservation support effort between 4 watershed resource inventory areas within an 860,000 acre area of responsibility offers unique challenges recognizing the agriculture diversity & prioritization associated within the irrigated-dry land and range communities. Supporting the ground water depletion issues being experienced throughout this entire sector requires not only a keen sense of awareness and understanding of the overall problems but continued community interaction within a four county area on interest.*
  - A. *Deep soil sampling for nitrate data*
  - B. *Well samples for Nitrate data*
  - C. *Well samples for County "Fecal" base line development.*
  - D. *6 County Direct Seed Minimum Tillage research project to determine economic impact of increased residue management for CP3 project*
  - E. *Big Bend RC&D meeting participation*
  - F. *Ground Water Area Management meeting interaction and participation*
  - G. *WRIA 34 Meeting participation & water monitoring*
  - H. *WRIA 43 Meeting interaction & participation*
  - I. *Electronic Information Management for DOE water quality data collected throughout Adams County*
  - J. *Storm Water monitoring*
  - K. *Geographical Information System (GIS) support for GWMA activities.*

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### **Information & Education**

- *Newsletter & community advisory for community best management practices.*
  1. *Annual Meeting & awards presentation with 150 participants.*
  2. *Cow Creek Quarterly news flyers for interested participants*
  3. *Fair Display to depict local accomplishments.*
  4. *Farm with the Wind results presentation at CP3 annual meeting*
  5. *Local Work Group interaction & support*
  6. *Ralston & Lind Field Day support*

Washington Conservation Districts assisting land managers with their conservation choices

